

What is claimed is:

1. An outboard motor comprising:

an engine; and

5 a cover structure defining an engine room in which the engine is installed, the cover structure comprising an top cover defining an upper part of the engine room and a under cover defining a lower part of the engine room, the top cover and the under cover being detachably connected together along horizontal edges thereof, the under cover comprising:

10 a pair of right and left cover members detachably connected together along opposing vertical edges thereof;

an opening formed in at least one of the cover members for allowing access therethrough to the engine installed in the engine room, the opening being vertically spaced from the horizontal edge of the under cover and
15 extending contiguously from the vertical edge of the at least one cover member; and

a lid made of elastic material and attached to an outer surface of the under cover so as to close the opening of the under cover, the lid being elastically deformable to open and close the opening of the under cover.

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2. An outboard motor according to claim 1, wherein the engine is disposed with a crankshaft disposed vertically and a cylinder disposed horizontally, the engine having a removable spark plug unit associated with the cylinder, the spark plug unit being disposed opposite to the opening of the under cover.

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3. An outboard motor according to claim 1, wherein the cover members of the under cover are formed from of a synthetic resin material.

4. An outboard motor according to claim 1, wherein each of the cover members has a cutout recess formed at the vertical edge thereof and forming, together with the cutout recess of another cover member, the opening of the under cover.

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5. An outboard motor according to claim 1, wherein the cover members are connected together by a plurality of joint portions arranged at intervals along the vertical edges of the cover members, each of the joint portions being composed of a first engagement lug projecting horizontally from the vertical
10 edge of one of the cover members, a second engagement lug projecting horizontally from the vertical edge of the other cover member, the first and second engagement lugs being fitted with each other in a front-and-rear direction of the under cover so as to form a half lap joint, and a screw fastener threaded into the first and second engagement lugs to join them together, the
15 joint portions including a first joint portion disposed between the horizontal edge of the under cover and the opening, and a second joint portion disposed below the opening.

6. An outboard motor according to claim 5, wherein the first and second
20 engagement lugs have sloped mating surfaces and are shaped into a reverse taper configuration.

7. An outboard motor according to claim 5, wherein the cover members each have a reinforcement frame disposed on an inner surface thereof, the
25 reinforcement frame including a first horizontal reinforcement rib extending along an upper edge of each respective cover member, a plurality of vertical reinforcement ribs extending vertically downward from the first horizontal

reinforcement rib, and a second horizontal reinforcement rib disposed immediately below the opening and extending from the vertical edge of each cover member to one of the vertical reinforcement ribs located near the vertical edge of the cover member, and wherein the first and second engagement lugs of the first joint portion are each formed integrally with the first horizontal reinforcement rib of a corresponding one of the cover members, and the first and second engagement lugs of the second joint portion are each formed integrally with the second horizontal reinforcement rib of a corresponding one of the cover members.

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8. An outboard motor according to claim 7, wherein the cover members are formed from of a synthetic resin material, and the reinforcement frame is formed from a synthetic resin material and vibration-welded to each of the cover members.

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9. An outboard motor according to claim 7, wherein the reinforcement frame further includes a third horizontal reinforcement rib disposed below the second horizontal reinforcement rib and extending parallel to the first horizontal reinforcement rib, the vertical reinforcement ribs extend between the first and third horizontal reinforcement ribs, the joint portions further include a third joint portion disposed below the second joint portion, and the first and second engagement lugs of the third joint portion are each formed integrally with the third horizontal reinforcement rib of a corresponding one of the cover members.

25 10. An outboard motor according to claim 9, further comprising a mount case on which the engine is mounted, the mount case having a flange, wherein the third horizontal reinforcement rib has a longitudinal groove facing in a lateral

inward direction of the under cover and receiving therein a peripheral edge of the flange of the mount case, the mount case forming a bottom wall of the engine room.

5 11. An outboard motor according to claim 1, wherein the lid has a seal portion elastically fitted in the opening of the under cover.

12. An outboard motor according to claim 11, wherein the seal portion has a groove snugly receiving therein at least part of a peripheral edge of the opening
10 of the under cover.

13. An outboard motor according to claim 11, wherein the lid further has a continuous seal lip extending around the seal portion and sealingly engaging the outer surface of the under cover.

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14. An outboard motor according to claim 1, wherein the lid has a first part which covers the opening of the under cover, and a second part integral with the first part and removably connected to the under cover, the first part being elastically bendable relative to the second part so as to open and close the
20 opening of the under cover.

15. An outboard motor according to claim 14, wherein the lid further has a thin joint portion interconnecting the first part and the second part and serving as a hinge.

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16. An outboard motor according to 14, wherein the first part has a seal portion elastically fitted in the opening of the under cover, and the second part has a

plurality of locking projections removably fitted in a corresponding number of lid-mounting holes formed in the under cover.

17. An outboard motor according to claim 16, wherein the seal portion has a
5 groove snugly receiving therein at least part of a peripheral edge of the opening
of the under cover.

18. An outboard motor according to claim 16, wherein the lid further has a
continuous seal lip extending around the seal portion and sealingly engaging
10 the outer surface of the under cover.

19. An outboard motor according to claim 18, wherein the first part of the lid
further has a plurality of locking projections removably fitted in a
corresponding number of lid-mounting holes formed in the under cover, the
15 locking projections of the first part and the locking projections of the second
part being arranged along a peripheral edge of the lid, the continuous seal lip
being disposed inward of the locking projections and outward of the seal portion
and extending along the peripheral edge of the lid without interference with the
locking projections.

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20. An outboard motor according to claim 14, wherein each of the cover
members has a cutout recess formed at the vertical edge thereof and forming,
together with the cutout recess of another cover member, the opening of the
under cover, and the second part of the lid extends over and along the vertical
25 edges of the cover members.